

**Special Education Committee Report
October 2008**

Chair: Jeanne Taylor

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At the beginning of September I sent an ICB form to Pat Gamage, Business Manager, to reserve Rockville High School for our annual Special Education Recognition Ceremony. The tentative date is Monday, May 4, 2009.

During the month of September electronic communications were sent out to PTA Presidents stressing the importance of recruiting Special Education Chairs for each and every school. As a direct result the number of schools which identified a Special Education Chair for the current school year went from 33 to 69.

Additional Activities:

Providing new incoming chairs with information about the position has been a priority. Updating the SPED Chair Directory has also been a top priority. It is an ongoing labor-intensive project. Chairs have been asked to identify what special education areas they are familiar with so that they can be listed as a resource in the Directory. A column will be added to indicate areas of specialty.

For clarification purposes I sent out an E-mail about the difference between the terms "special needs" and "special education". More than one person has expressed confusion over these terms. The MCCPTA web site was updated to reflect our meeting program for the 2008/2009 school year.

We will hold our Annual Kickoff Meeting for the local PT(S)A Special Education Chairs On Monday, October 6, 2008, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Members from numerous special education advocacy groups will present information about their organizations. Our audience will hear how advocates from around the county provide support for various special needs populations. All meetings are held at Carver, in the cafeteria.

Last week the Special Education Committee had a table at the Delegates meeting. I handed out Baltimore's Child Resource Guides, Chair recruitment letters, and a copy of our meeting program.

Yesterday I met with Judy Pattik, MCPS Director of Special Education Operations. Judy brought up the deep budget cuts and I once again shared the impact I have experienced with at least two schools. Instead of meeting on a regular basis we agree to meet as needed. Judy will attend the December SPED Chair meeting to introduce herself and explain how she fits in the MCPS organization. Hopefully her counterpart, Gwen Mason, Director, Dept. of Special Education Services will also attend.